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# THREE HEROINES OF NEW ENGLAND ROMANCE

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*granddaughter of*
*General Peter Gansevoort, junior*
*and widow of the*
*Honorable Abraham Lansing*
*of Albany, New York*

AN
(Alden)
GANSEVOURT - SAVAGE
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# THREE HEROINES OF NEW ENGLAND ROMANCE

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

with her sweeping brocades and
a cushion towering upon
her powdered head

# THREE HEROINES OF NEW ENGLAND ROMANCE

THEIR true stories herein set forth by Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford Miss Louise Imogen Guiney and Miss Alice Brown

With many little picturings authentic and fanciful by Edmund H Garrett and published by Little Brown and Company Boston · 1894

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EDMUND H. GARRETT.

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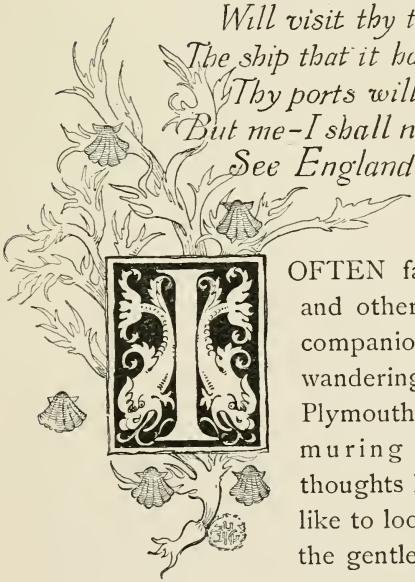
# PRISCILLA

Priscilla

# PRISCILLA

*"The swallow with summer*
*Will wing o'er the seas,*
*The wind that I sigh to*
*Will visit thy trees.*
*The ship that it hastens*
*Thy ports will contain,*
*But me—I shall never*
*See England again!"*



OFTEN fancy John Alden, and others, too, among his companions of kindly fame, wandering down the long Plymouth beach and murmuring to themselves thoughts like these. And I like to look in the annals of the gentle Pilgrims and the

sterner Puritans for any pages where one may find muffled for a moment the strain of high emprise which wins our awe and our praise, but not so surely our love, and gain access on their more human side to the men and women who lived the noblest romance in all history.

So one comes on the story of the Lady Arbella, and her love and death, with the sweet surprise one has in finding a fragile flower among granite ledges. So the Baby Peregrine's velvet cheek has the unconscious caress of every mother who thinks of him rocked to sleep in his rough cradle by the sounding sea. So the thought deals tenderly with Dorothy Bradford, who crossed the mighty darkness of the deep only to fall overboard from the "Mayflower," and be drowned in harbor, and would fain reap some harvest of romance in the coming over sea, three years afterward, of Mrs. Southworth, with her young sons, Constant and Thomas, to marry the Governor, who had loved her as Alice Carpenter lang syne. And so the story

"'In his rough cradle
by the sounding
sea.'"

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of John Alden's courtship is read as if we had found some human beings camped in the midst of demigods.

Certainly Miles Standish was not of the demigods, if he was of the heroes. No Puritan ascetic he, by nature or belief. One might imagine him some soul that failed to find incarnation among the captains and pirates of the great Elizabeth's time, the Raleighs and Drakes and Frobishers, and who, coming along a hundred years too late, did his best to repair the mistake. A choleric fellow, who had quarrelled with his kin, and held himself wronged by them of his patrimony; of a quarrelsome race, indeed, that had long divided itself into the Catholic Standishes of Standish and the Protestant Standishes of Duxbury; a soldier who served the Queen in a foreign garrison, and of habits and tastes the more emphasized because he was a little man; supposed never to have been of the same communion as those with whom he cast in his lot, — it is not easy to see the reason of his attraction to the Pilgrims

in Holland. Perhaps he chose his wife, Rose, from among them, and so united himself to them; if not that, then possibly she herself may have been inclined to their faith, and have drawn him with her; or it may have been that his doughty spirit could not brook to see oppression, and must needs espouse and champion the side crushed by authority. For the rest, at the age of thirty-five the love of adventure was still an active passion with him. That he was of quick, but not deep affections is plain from the swiftness with which he would fain have consoled himself after the death of Rose, his wife; and, that effort failing, by his sending to England for his wife's sister Barbara, as it is supposed, and marrying her out of hand. That he was behind the spirit of the movement with which he was connected may be judged by his bringing home and setting up the gory head of his conquered foe; for although he was not alone in that retrograde act, since he only did what he had been ordered to do by the elders, yet the holy John Robinson, the in-

ROSE STANDISH

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spirer and conscience of them all, cried out at that, "Oh that he had converted some before he killed any!" Nevertheless, that and other bloody deeds seem to have been thoroughly informed with his own satisfaction in them. His armor, his sword, his inconceivable courage, his rough piety, that "swore a prayer or two," — all give a flavor of even earlier times to the story of his day, and bring into the life when certain dainties were forbidden, as smacking of Papistry, a goodly flavor of wassail-bowls, and a certain powerful reminiscence of the troops in Flanders.

That such a nature as the fiery Captain's could not exist without the soothing touch of love, could not brook loneliness, and could not endure grief, but must needs arm himself with forgetfulness and a new love when sorrow came to him in the loss of the old, is of course to be expected. If he were a little precipitate in asking for Priscilla's affection before Rose had been in her unnamed grave three months, something of the blame is due to the condition of the colony, which made

sentimental considerations of less value than practical ones, — an evident fact, when Mr. Winslow almost immediately on the death of his wife married the mother of Peregrine White, not two months a widow, hardly more a mother.

Apparently there were not a great many young girls in the little company. The gentle Priscilla Mullins and the high-minded Mary Chilton were the most prominent ones, at any rate. One knows instinctively that it would not be Mary Chilton towards whom the soldier would be drawn, — the daring and spirited girl who must be the first to spring ashore when the boat touched land. It is true that John Alden's descendants ungallantly declare that he was before her in that act; but no one disputes her claim to be the first woman whose foot touched shore; and that is quite enough for one who loves to think of her and of the noble and serene Ann Hutchinson as the far-away mothers of the loftiest and loveliest soul she ever knew.

The daring and spirited girl.

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One can well conjecture Mary Chilton as comforting and supporting Priscilla in the terrors of that voyage, in such storms as that where the little ship, tossed at the waves' will, lay almost on her beam-ends, and the drowning man who had gone down fathoms deep clutched her topsail-halyards and saved himself; or in calmer moments reading the blessed promises of His word. Young girls willing to undertake that voyage, that enterprise, and whose hearts were already so turned heavenward as the act implied, must have been of a lofty type of thought and nature; they must often have walked the narrow deck, exchanging the confidences of their hopes and dreams. I see them sitting and softly singing hymns together, on the eve of that first Sunday on the new coast, sitting by that fragrant fire of the red cedar which Captain Standish brought back to the ships after the first exploration of the forest. Priscilla might have sung, "The Lord is my shepherd," and the voice of Rose may have added a note of sweetness to the strain. But

that gentle measure would never have expressed the feelings of the Captain, whose God was "a man of war." If, out of the tunes allowed, there were one that fitted the wild burden, — and unless their annexation to the book of Common Prayer caused the disapproval of "All such Psalms of David as Thomas Sternholde, late Grome of the Kinges Majestyes Robes, did in his lyfe-tyme drawe into Englyshe Metre," — I can feel the zest with which the Captain may have roared out, —

"The Lord descended from above,
And bowed the heavens high,
And underneath His feet He cast
The darkness of the sky.
On seraph and on cherubim
Full royally He rode,
And on the wings of mighty winds
Came flying all abroad!"

One might suppose that Priscilla, gentle as tradition represents her, would have been attracted by the fire and spirit of the brave Captain. But perhaps she was not so very

"Or in calmer moments
reading the blessed promises
of His word."

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gentle. Was there a spice of feminine coquetry in her famous speech to John Alden, for all her sweet Puritanism? Or was it that she understood the dignity and worth of womanhood, and was the first in this new land to take her stand upon it?

The whole story of the courtship which her two lovers paid to her is a bit of human nature suddenly revealing itself in the flame of a great passion, — a mighty drama moving before us, and a chance light thrown upon the stage giving the life and motion of a scene within a scene. There is a touching quality in the modest feeling of the soldier; he is still a young man, not at all grizzled, or old, or gray, as the poet paints him, — perhaps thirty-five or thirty-six years old. Daring death at every daily exposure of the colony to dangers from disease, from the tomahawk, from the sea, from the forest, always the one to go foremost and receive the brunt, to put his own life and safety a barrier against the common enemy, — yet he shrank from telling a girl that she had fired

his inflammable heart, and would fain let her know the fact by the one who, if he has left no record of polished tongue or ready phrase, was the one he loved as the hero loves the man of peace, the one who loved him equally, — the youth of twenty-three whose "countenance of gospel looks" could hardly at that time have carried in its delicate lineaments much of the greatness of nature that may have belonged to the ancestor of two of our Presidents.

For the purposes of romance, fathers and mothers are often much in the way; and the poet and the romancer, with a reckless disregard of the life and safety of Mr. William Mullins, her respected parent, represent Priscilla as orphaned while her father was yet alive. It was to Mr. Mullins that John Alden, torn between duty and passion, and doubtless pale with suffering, presented the Captain's claims. If the matter was urged rather perfunctorily, Mr. Mullins seems not to have noticed it, as he gave his ready consent. But we may be confident that Priscilla did;

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and that, after all, maidenly delicacy would never have suffered her to utter her historic words, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" if the deadly sinking of his heart had not been evident in his downcast face. Does it need any chronicle to tell us what a flame of joy shot through John Alden's heart at the instant of those words, — what an icy wave of despair quenched it, — what a horror of shame overcame Priscilla till her blushes became a pain? For when she had dared so much, and dared in vain, what else but shame could be her portion?

They must have been dark days that followed for the two young lovers. Can you not see John Alden trying to walk away his trouble on the stretch of the long beach, to escape his sense of treachery, his sorrow in his friend's displeasure, his joy and his shame together?

> "There, my cloak about my face,
> Up and down the sands I 'd pace,
> Making footprints for the spray
> To wash away.
> . . . . . .

"Up and down the barren beaches,
Round the ragged belts of land,
In along the curving reaches,
Out along the horns of sand."

There, too, came Priscilla, without much doubt, when the closeness of the little cluster of log huts, within a few feet of one another, grew too oppressive, or the notion that others looked askance at her, lest in any recklessness of desperation the Captain, the mainstay of the colony, threw his life away

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in the daily expeditions he undertook, — came not as girls stroll along the shore to gather shells, to write their names on the sand, to pick up the seaweed with hues like those

> "Torn from the scarfs and gonfalons of Kings
> Who dwell beneath the waters,"

as very likely she had done ere this, but to forget her trouble, to diffuse and lose it. For here, added to homesickness and horror and impending famine, was a new trouble, worse perhaps than all the rest. If her lover had been lost at sea, she might have watched for his sail,

> "And hope at her yearning heart would knock
> When a sunbeam on a far-off rock
> Married a wreath of wandering foam."

But this was more unbearable than loss: she had dishonored herself in his eyes; she had betrayed herself, and he had scorned her; and she came to the sea for the comfort which nearness to the vast and the infinite always gives. Even that was not solitude; for there, a mile away, lay the "Mayflower," still at

anchor, where the spy-glass made her prisoner, while it was not safe for a lonely girl to tread the shore at night, watching the glow of the evening star or the moonswale on the sea. Perhaps, with Mary Chilton by her side, or with some of the smaller children of the colony, she climbed a hill, protected by the minion and the other piece of ordnance, which were afterwards mounted on the roof of the rude church, and looked down over the cluster of cabins where now the fair town lies, and thought life hard and sorry, and longed, as John Alden himself did, for the shelter of Old England. Perhaps she had no time for lovesick fancies, anyway, in the growing sickness among the people, which tasked the strength and love of all; and when, watching with the sick at night, she thrust aside a casement latticed with oiled paper, or chanced to go outside the door for fresh water to cool a fevered lip, she saw a planet rising out of the sea, or the immeasurable universe of stars wheeling overhead, over desolate shore, and water, and wilderness,

"Time to come Priscilla"

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she felt her own woe too trivial to be dwelt upon; and when on the third of March her

father died and was laid in the field where the wheat was planted over the level graves for fear of the Indians, we may be sure that

she saw her trouble as part of the cross she was to bear, and waited in patience and meekness either till the rumor came of the death of Miles Standish in the Indian skirmish, — of which we know nothing, — or till John Alden had made it up with his conscience and found his chance, not in the crowded little log huts, not on the open shore, but within the leafy covert of the freshly springing woodside, with none but the fallow deer to see them, to put an end to her unrest.

Probably that period of bliss now dawned which makes most lovers feel themselves lifted into a region just above the earth and when they tread on air. It was in the hallowed time of this courtship, on the skirts of the deep pine forests, that they first happened on the mayflower, the epigea, full of the sweetest essence of the earth which lends it her name, and felt as if love and youth and joy and innocence had invented a flower for them alone, — the deeply rosy and ineffably fragrant mayflower that blooms only in the

"First happened on the mayflower"

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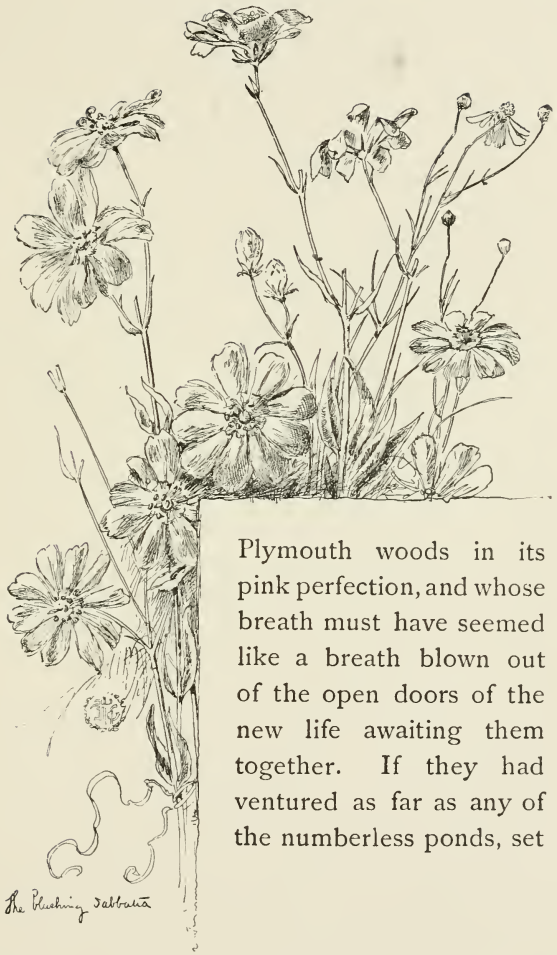


Plymouth woods in its pink perfection, and whose breath must have seemed like a breath blown out of the open doors of the new life awaiting them together. If they had ventured as far as any of the numberless ponds, set

like jewels in the ring of the green woods about them, something later in their new year, they would have found the blushing sabbatia in all its pristine loveliness, — the flower most typical of Priscilla herself; the flower to which some fortunate fate, in view of the sabbatical character of the region, gave the name of an old Italian botanist, as if it were its own from the beginning; a flower which is to-day less rare around Plymouth than elsewhere. Now, in the soft spring evenings, too, it may be that they strolled along the beach, and watched the phosphorescence of the waters playing about the sacred rock with which the continent had gone out first to meet them, all unweeting that it was the " corner-stone of a nation." Now, — for lovers will be lovers still, although the whole body of Calvinism be behind them, and the lurking foe of the forest before, — they sat on the Burial Hill by night, and watched such a scene as William Allingham has pictured, —

John Alden.

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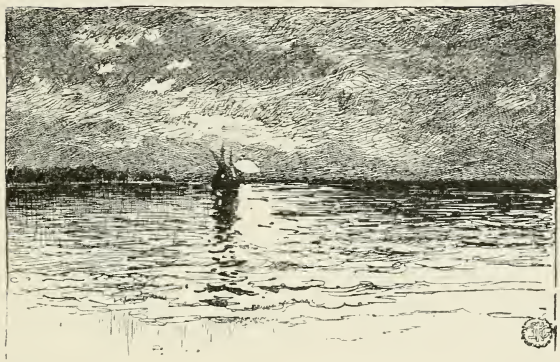
"Above the headlands massy, dim,
A swelling glow, a fiery birth,
A marvel in the sky doth swim,
Advanced upon the hush of earth.



"The globe, o'erhanging bright and brave
The pale green-glimmering ocean-floor,
Silvers its wave, its rustling wave
Soft folded on the shelving floor.

"O lonely moon, a lonely place
Is this thou cheerest with thy face;
Three sand-side houses, and afar
The steady beacon's faithful star" —

only, instead of the three sand-side houses it was "the Seven Houses of Plymouth," and

all the beacon was the light in the "Mayflower's" or the "Fortune's" shrouds.

That the betrothal did not impair the friendship of the lovers with the impetuous Captain Standish, we can understand from the fact that when, subsequently, the Captain built his house over on Duxbury Hill, John Alden's house stood near it; and that later, — and unhindered, for aught we know, — John Alden's daughter married the Captain's son. It pleases me to think that the dear daughter-in-law, by whom, in his last will and testament, the old Captain desired to be buried, was the daughter of Priscilla Mullins.

Priscilla and John must have had time enough for this sweet acceptance of life and nature together, for although in other instances courtship was brief, yet we know that their wedding certainly did not take place till May, as Governor Winslow then married Mrs. White, and that marriage was recorded as the first in the colony. There is indeed some probability that the engagement of the young

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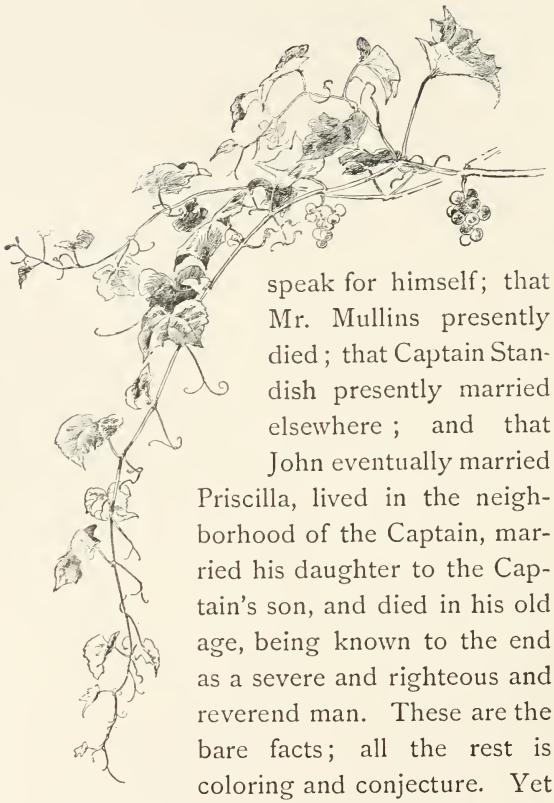
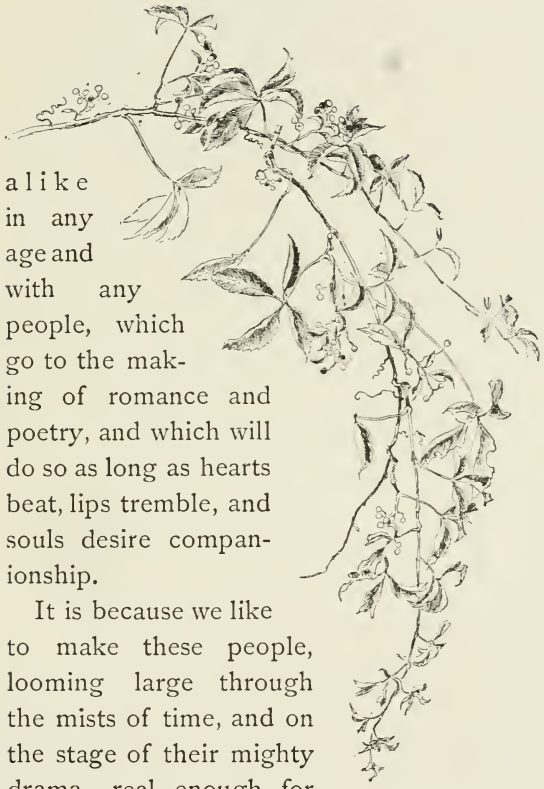
people was of quite another character from the incomprehensibly brief one just mentioned. Perhaps John Alden was building his house, and it may be that it had to be more or less commodious, since he probably became the protector of the family which Mr. Mullins left, and which is registered as numbering five persons upon landing. But if we accept the legend regarding the wedding journey, we might have to postpone the bridal for some seasons, as it was not until three years after their arrival that Edward Winslow, having gone to England and returned with cattle, made such a thing possible as that traditional ride on the back of the gentle white bull with its crimson cloth and cushion.

In fact, the incidents of real occurrence and the traditions of real descent, concerning the courtship of Priscilla, are very few. We know that Rose Standish died; that the Captain sent John Alden to urge his suit before Mr. Mullins, who replied favorably; that Priscilla asked him why he did not



speak for himself; that Mr. Mullins presently died; that Captain Standish presently married elsewhere; and that John eventually married Priscilla, lived in the neighborhood of the Captain, married his daughter to the Captain's son, and died in his old age, being known to the end as a severe and righteous and reverend man. These are the bare facts; all the rest is coloring and conjecture. Yet one has the right to surround these facts with all the possibilities of human emotion,



alike in any age and with any people, which go to the making of romance and poetry, and which will do so as long as hearts beat, lips tremble, and souls desire companionship.

It is because we like to make these people, looming large through the mists of time, and on the stage of their mighty drama, real enough for our sympathies, that we love Mr. Longfellow's version of their story. Nothing more skilful,

gentle, and beautiful has ever been written concerning the Pilgrims than the beloved poet's verses. Every incident in their pages is absolutely true to the life of the period, and although the anachronisms are many, yet they do not exceed the province of poetic license, — they are perhaps necessary to it; and many of the events are those which actually took place, if not at the stated time. Thus, for instance, it was at a later season than the poem intimates that the gory head of the savage was brought home; yet it was brought home. It was at another date that the rattlesnake skin filled with arrows was sent; yet it was sent. It was Governor Bradford and not Captain Standish who returned it stuffed with powder and shot; yet it was returned. It was much later than represented that property was held in severalty, and individuals owned their dwellings; yet they did do so in time. It was much later than the first autumn that the ships of the merchants brought cattle; yet they did bring cattle. But whether the cat-

tle came early or late, that snow-white bull with his crimson saddle-cloth gives occa-

sion for one of the most beautiful pictures in literature. Europa herself, fleeing over the meadow on her white bull, flecked with

warm sunshine, with shadows of leaves and flowers, all white and rosy loveliness as she fled, is not a fairer picture to the mind than this exquisite one of the bridal procession, where

"Pleasantly murmured the brook as they crossed the ford in the forest,
Pleased with the image that passed, like a dream of love, through its bosom,
Tremulous, floating in air, o'er the depths of the azure abysses.
Down through the golden leaves the sun was pouring his splendors,
Gleaming on purple grapes that, from branches above them suspended,
Mingled their odorous breath with the balm of the pine and the fir-tree,
Wild and sweet as the clusters that grew in the valley of Eshcol,
Like a picture, it seemed, of the primitive pastoral ages,
Fresh with the youth of the world."

AGNES SURRIAGE

# AGNES SURRIAGE

*"Misled by Fancy's meteor ray,*
*By Passion driven,*
*But yet the light that led astray*
*Was light from Heaven"*

NE of the few perfect jewels of romance, needing neither the craft of imagination nor cunning device of word-cutting lapidary, is that of Agnes Surriage, so improbable, according to every-day standards, so informed with the truest sentiment, and so calculated to satisfy every exaction of literary art, that even the most critical eye might be forgiven for tracing its shifting color to the light of fancy, and not of homely truth. Even at the present day, when the "Neck" is overrun by the too-civilized cottager, to whose gilded ease

summer life everywhere most patiently conforms, Marblehead is one of our coast wonders, — a fortress perennially held by beauty, and dedicated to her use; but let the reminiscent gaze wander back a century and a half,

and how entirely fitted to the requirements of fancy would it find the quaint town, the vagrant peninsula, and serenely hospitable harbor! The town itself was fantastically builded, as if by a generation of autocratic landowners, each with a wilful bee in his bonnet. Upstairs and downstairs ran the

'Houses not actually connected to the street'

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streets; they would have respected not my lady's chamber. Their modest dwellings seem by no means the outcome of a community governed by common designs and necessities; rather do they voice a capricious and eccentric individualism.

"Well, you see," said an old Marbleheader, indulgently, "they built the houses fust, an' the streets arterwards. One man says to himself, 'I 'm a-goin' to set here; *you* can set where you 're a mind to.' But," he added, in loyal justification of his forbears, "I tell ye what 't is, they done the best they could with what they had to do *with!*"

For they were governed by no inexplicable and crazy fancy, — these sturdy fishermen of Marblehead; they were merely constrained by the rigid requirements of their chosen site. Building on that stony hillside, they were slaves of the rock, dominated by it,

pressed into corners. The houses themselves were founded upon solid ledges, while the principal streets followed the natural valleys between; and with all such rioting of irregularity, that long-past generation was doubtless well content. A house set "catty-cornered" to the world at large, sovereign over its bit of a garden, was sufficient unto itself, overtopped though it were by the few great colonial mansions, upspringing here and there, or by the solid dignity of the old Town-House. The smaller dividing paths, zigzag as they would, led to all the Romes of local traffic, and presently the houses followed the paths, the paths developed into rocky streets, and lo! there was Marblehead, a town dropped from the skies, and each house taking root where it fell.

But if any one reading the tale of these wilful dwellings should soberly doubt the common interests of the people, let him climb the rocky eminence in their midst to the old graveyard, where stood the little church, the oldest of all; here the first set-

The solid dignity
of the old
Town House

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tlers worshipped, and here, in comforting nearness, they buried their dead, within the niches spared them by the rock. It was set thus high, this homely tabernacle of faith,

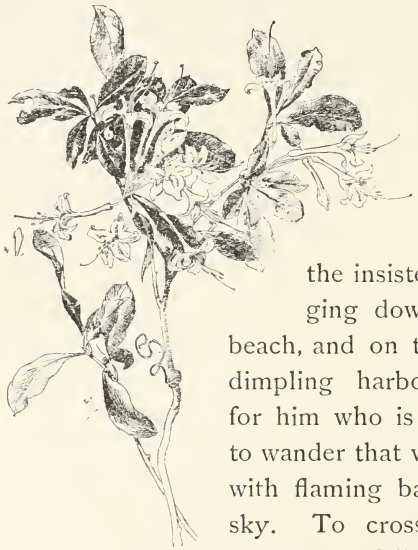
to overlook land and water, that no stealthy Indian band might creep upon the worshippers unaware, — for those were the days of the church militant in more than a poetic sense. An admirable spot this for the antiquary, wherein to pursue his loving labor of

coaxing forward a reluctant past! Ancient headstones will salute his eye, and of these said one local lingerer, garrulous as he who discoursed on Yorick's skull, "I can tell the date of 'em all, jest as I could a buildin', by the architectur'!" But let him not conclude that in scanning the slabs erected two centuries ago he has seen all, — for here lies many an unrecorded grave. "They had to send to England for their stones then," said the Oldest Inhabitant. "Poor folks could n't afford that, an' most of 'em went without."

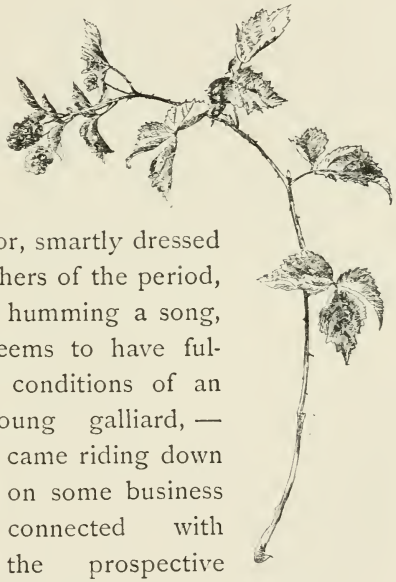
Across the little harbor, at nightfall populous with white sails, stretches the "Neck," once a lonely, rock-defended treasury of beauty, besieged by wave, and alternately lashed and caressed by the fickle, but persistent foam. Well fitted are its girdling citadels for enduring warfare; their towers outlast the feet that climb them, and their masonry crumbles not below, save slowly, through the infinite patience of the eternally tossing sea. And when the eye tired of this majesty of the illimitable, when it wearied of ocean spray,

spouting column-like through some gigantic cleft, and found itself oppressed by the rhythm of rolling foam, what would it have seen, on turning inland from Castle Rock, that century and a half agone? A stretch of green pasture-land, becoming yellow as August marches on, — the "Neck" itself. Then, wandering on unwearied, still traversing the "Neck," sweet, bosky hollows, where lie to-day such treasures of shining leaf and soft-lipped flower as Paradise might claim. These are the wild, sunken gardens on the road to Devereux, glowing in the gold of a royal tansy, greenly odorous of fern, and sweet with the wild azalea, — honey-smeared and pollen-powdered, loved of the bee, and his chief tempter to drunken revels on the way from market. The button-bush holds aloft her sign of cool white balls; loosestrife stars the green undergrowth with yellow; and over stick and stone the blackberry clings and crowds. There the wild rose lives and blooms, fed on manna brought by roving winds and fleeting sunlight, never unblest,

even when the purveyors of honey come winging by, to rifle her sweets, and leave her to the ripening of maturity and the solid glow of her red-hipped matronhood. And on the left again, still facing south, is the insistent sea, dragging down its pebbly beach, and on the right, the dimpling harbor, reddened, for him who is wise enough to wander that way at sunset, with flaming banners of the sky. To cross the harbor again, and follow the mainland back to a point nearly opposite the lighthouse of the Neck, is to find, neighbored by the old graveyard, ruined and grassy Fort Sewall, to-day the lounging-place for village



great-grandfathers, or vantage-ground for overlooking a yacht race, but in 1742, when Charles Henry Frankland was Collector of the Port of Boston, just a building. And one day in the previous year, the gallant young Collector, smartly dressed in the fine feathers of the period, and no doubt humming a song, — since he seems to have fulfilled all the conditions of an interesting young galliard, — came riding down on some business connected with the prospective fort. He stopped at the Fountain Inn for a draught, — not so innocent, perhaps, as that from the clear well still springing near the spot, — and,



scrubbing the tavern floor, there knelt before him, in lovely disarray, the sweet beggar-maid destined to be crowned at once by the favor of this careless Cophetua. Let that phrase be swiftly amended! Agnes Surriage was no beggar-maid, but the honest daughter of hard-working fisher-folk, and patient under her own birthright of toil. Her beauty was something rare and delicate, calculated to arrest the eye and chain the heart; the simple dignity of her demeanor was no more to be affected through her menial task than a rose by clouded skies. Her fair feet were naked, and blushed not at their poverty, but Frankland's heart ached with pity of them, and he closed her fingers over a coin, to buy shoes and stockings. Then he gave her "good-day," and rode away, — but not to forget her; only to muse on her grace, and to start at the vision of her eyes, shining between him and his bills of merchandise and lading. Again he came riding that way, and again he found her, still barefooted; but when he reproached her for

"again he came riding"

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having failed to put his coin to its destined use, she blushed, and answered in the homely dialect of Marblehead, which yet had no power over the music of her voice, that the shoes and stockings were bought, but that she kept them to wear to meeting. And now the young Collector went often and more often to Marblehead, until the day came when he obtained her parents' permission to become her guardian, and take her away to be educated. So the wild bird entered voluntarily into the life of cages, to learn the demeanor and song-notes which were approved by the fashionable Boston of the day.

The quaint, village-like, and yet all-regal Boston of the past! Perhaps this was one of the most interesting pages of its life history, before the royal insolence had roused in it an answering manhood; when fashion scrupulously followed a far-away court over sea, and the daily life of luxurious British officials was so distinct from that of the Puritan stratum of society. In England, public affairs

seesawed between the policies of George II. and Walpole, and from the world of letters, Richardson and Fielding were amusing the young bloods of the day, and by no means toughening their moral fibre. The leisure of the bold Britons who ruled over us was not for a moment poisoned by fear of American defection from the royal mother-land. Rather, for men like Frankland, was this loitering in western airs their *Wanderjahr*, a pleasant exile, whence they would some day return, with treasures of new experience, to sit down beside the English hearthstone, and, Othello-like, rehearse the wonders they had seen. Meantime, they walked the streets, bravely attired in small-clothes and wigs, discussing the troubles brewing with the French, and seeking, so far as they might, to build up a miniature England within the savage-girdled settlements of the New World. Sir Harry Frankland stands out from the faint portraiture of the time as one of the most knightly souls of all. He was young, blest with an attractive presence, and his

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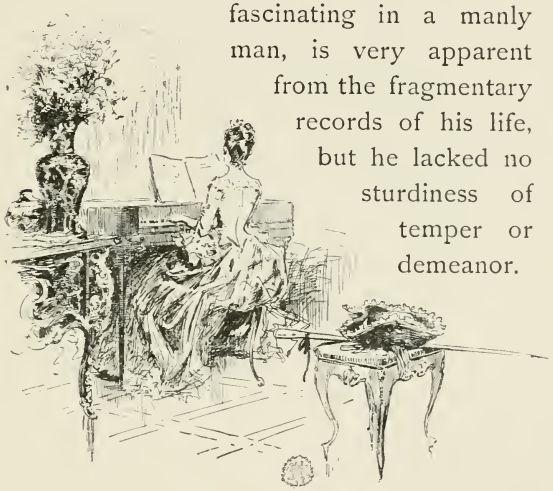
tastes were those of the gentleman and the scholar. That he was sensitive and refined even to the point of evincing that feminine strain of temperament so fascinating in a manly man, is very apparent from the fragmentary records of his life, but he lacked no sturdiness of temper or demeanor.



Agnes Surriage responded at once to the new influences about her. Indeed, she was of those to whom borrowed graces are ex-

ternal and almost unnecessary: Nature had dowered her with the riches of beauty, nobility, and modesty of mien; and to adorn her by artifice was merely to remove the rose from its garden bed, and set it in a silver vase. From God's lady, fitted to scrub the tavern floor and lose no charm thereby, she became a dame who might have been commended to courts and palaces. She learned to sing, to play on the harpsichord, and dance; for painting, embroidery, and all the fragile accomplishments of the day, she had a surprising aptitude. She was surrounded by luxuries which might have proved bewildering to a less simple and noble nature, and, last of all, she stooped to receive the crown of her guardian's love. Alas! poor maid of Marblehead! for this was a crown that smirched the brow and stung as with nettles, no matter how bravely its blossoms nodded above. Frankland loved her, but he was bound by the fetters of an ancestral pride; he owed all to his family, and nothing to his own manly honor, — and he could not

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marry her. It is pitiful to guess with what tragic battlings of heart and conscience her overthrow must have been accomplished, but even she could scarcely have counted the cost, — the daily torture, the hourly pinch

of circumstance, when one after another of Boston's best, who had not failed to recognize the fisher-girl, rich in nothing but her dower of beauty and character, refused to countenance the fine lady, so ironically favored of Fortune. In the humble home at Marblehead, her name became the key-

note of shame; for though these fisher-folk were rude of speech almost beyond belief, though they caroused wildly half the year, preparatory to their summer voyaging, they had a hard hand and a rough word ready for one who was light o' love. She had given all for the one jewel, and both her little worlds, of birth and adoption, trembled from their centres. All the more did she turn to Frankland, as to her sun of happiness, and in the unfailing warmth of his affection she alternately drooped and smiled.

Then began the second and more glowing chapter of this dramatic tale. Sir Harry must have been bitterly moved by the social ostracism of his ward and lady, and he shortened the period of her expiation by the only possible device left him, save one, and took her away. He had bought a large tract of land in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, and there he proceeded to build a manor-house, where, in a humble fashion, life might copy the abundance and solid magnificence of England's ancestral homes. The country itself

"All the more did she turn to Frankland."

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was a wonder of hill and valley, — hills where the loftier beauty of Wachusett and Monadnock might be viewed, valley where a happy village nestled, and where clear, cool streams flowed lightly to their outlet. Sir Harry was a clever purveyor of the good things of life; he made his manor-house commodious and fair to see, and erected a comfortable farm-house for his laborers; his great hall roof was supported by fluted columns, and its walls were hung with tapestry, rich of hue and texture. The house was approached by a long and stately avenue cut through magnificent chestnut-trees; the ground sloped down in commanding terraces of blooming sward, and the gardens and orchards were marvels of growth and abundance. In his gardening he took delight, but, alas for human pride and power! only the giant box of his borders and a few ancient trees have seen the present century, to attest his vanished life.

Here the two must have lived Arcadian days, in all but lightness of heart. The lovely maid, for whom no labor had been

too menial, reigned the queen of this lavish domain. She was the mistress of negro

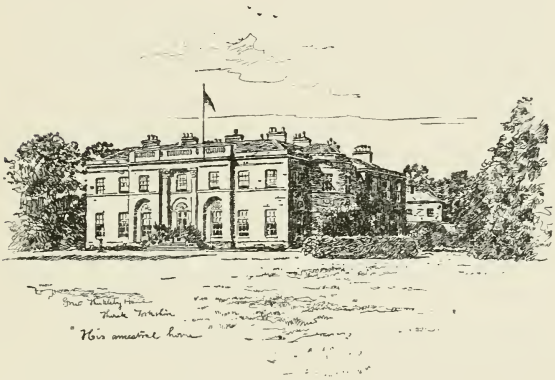
slaves, she walked in silk attire; and local gossip assures us that her tastes and those of Sir Harry were in the most perfect har-

mony. They rode together through their own plantation or over the fascinatingly unbroken country without; they read the latest consignment of books from England; and Sir Harry hunted the fox and fished for trout in the cold streams, possibly while Agnes did a bit of graceful and ladylike sketching on her own account, — for it must not be forgotten that she belonged to that unexacting era when large eyes and sloping shoulders were much in vogue, and when the work of womankind was all the more attractive for being a trifle thin and "very pretty." Probably her accomplishments were all the more entrancing for matching "lady's Greek, without the accents." Here in their primeval wilderness, primeval morals were more to be tolerated, and the autocrats of Boston did not disdain to visit them — undoubtedly without their wives! At least Sir Harry did not lack society; and there is a tale that at the

banquets, enlivened by the choice wines which came in his way by virtue of his collectorship, he, canny man! drank from a glass cunningly made shallow, so that he could toss off an equal number of potations with his guests, and yet remain sober while they slid imperceptibly under the table. For in these days, it was almost incumbent upon gentlemen to conclude a banquet by lying reclined "like gods together, careless of mankind."

But the swiftly moving drama could not be stayed; and Sir Harry, called to England by imperative duties, carried his treasure with him to his ancestral home. At least there was this to be said in his favor, during these doubtful days, — he was not of those who love and ride away, and his loyalty to the one chosen woman never suffered reproach. In England, either defiant or strangely obtuse to the values of their relation, he introduced Agnes to his family; but neither her beauty nor accomplishments redeemed her unhappy standing, and she was

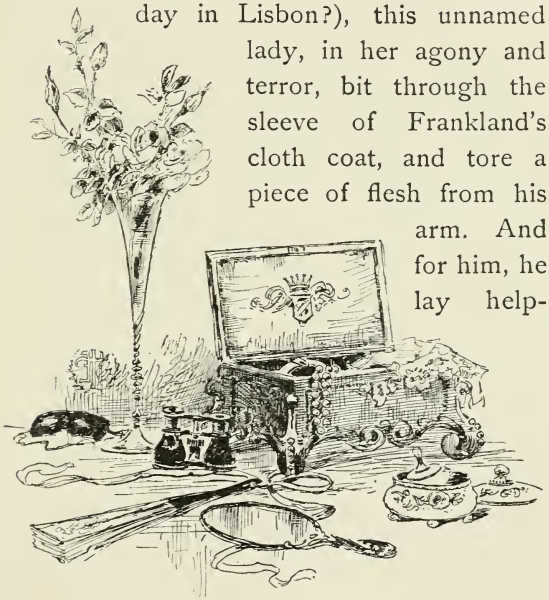
made to suffer that social ignominy which is so absolutely blighting to a sensitive spirit. The strange irony of her position is very dramatic in retrospect. A lovely and loving woman, bound to the man who should have



been her husband, by all the most holy vows of nature, she was destined to an unrelieved and bitter expiation; and though Sir Harry doubtless suffered with her, yet, in obedience to the laws that govern womankind, Agnes must have endured a desolation of misery entirely unimagined by him. Again they

went into happy exile, and made the grand tour of the Continent, ending at Lisbon, at that time a species of modern Sybaris. Enriched by Brazilian gold, the court was supported in a magnificence then unparalleled in Europe. The opera was the finest on the Continent, and one pageant succeeded another, obedient to the whims of any ever-regnant luxury. Here, too, on the eminence of the seven hills, a colony of wealthy English merchants had congregated, and spent their fairy gold, flowing back through the magic portals leading to the New World, with a prodigality emulating that of the court. Here Frankland gave himself up to the fair god of Pleasure; he lived as if there were to be no morrow, and lo! the morrow came, and with it the judgment of God. On All Saints' Day, 1755, the sun rose in splendor over the city of Lisbon; and all its inhabitants, from courtier to beggar, took their way churchward, for the celebration of High Mass. Frankland, in his court dress, was riding with a lady, when without warning the earth surged sea-like

under them, and a neighboring house fell, engulfing them in its ruins. The lady (who was she, O Historic Muse? and was their talk light or sober, that care-free day in Lisbon?), this unnamed lady, in her agony and terror, bit through the sleeve of Frankland's cloth coat, and tore a piece of flesh from his arm. And for him, he lay helpless, reading the red record of his sins, and adjudging himself in nothing so guilty as the



wrong to the woman who loved him. Strange and awful scenes had driven the city frantic. Churches and dwellings had fallen; the sea swelled mountain-high, and swallowed the quay, with its thousands of bewildered fugitives. Lisbon went mad, and beat its breast, beseeching all the saints for mercy. But to one great spirit, even the insecurity of the solid earth was as nothing compared with the danger of her beloved mate. Agnes Surriage, aflame with anxiety for Frankland, ran out, as soon as the surging streets would give her foothold, and rushed about the desolated city in agonizing search. By some chance, strange as all the chances of her dramatic life, she came upon the very spot of his fearful burial. She tore at the rubbish above him with her tender hands; she offered large rewards, so purchasing the availing strength of others, and Frankland was saved.

To court and people, the earthquake voiced the vengeance of an angry God; to Frankland, it had been a flaming finger, writing on

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the wall a sentence for him alone, and in security he did not forget its meaning. Waiting only for the healing of his wounds, he at last besought the blessing of holy church upon his love; and Agnes Surriage underwent a radiant change into the Lady Agnes Frankland. And now for a time her days became gleaming points in a procession of happiness. Her husband returned with her to England, where she was received as a beloved daughter of the house, and enshrined in those steadfast English hearts, where fealty, once given, so seldom grows cold; and after a tranquil space, the two set sail again for America. Even amid the scenes of her former martyrdom, Agnes was no longer to be regarded as an alien and social outcast. She walked into Boston society as walks a princess entering her rightful domain, and there took up the sceptre of social sway at the aristocratic North End. Frankland had purchased the most lordly mansion there, of which the fragmentary descriptions are enough to make the antiquary's mouth water.

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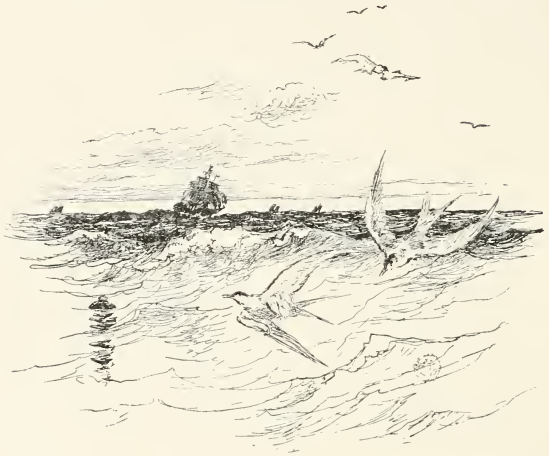
The stairs ascending from the great hall were so broad and low that he could ride his pony up and down in safety; there were wonderful inlaid floors, Italian marbles, and carven



pillars. There Agnes lived the life of a dignified matron, and a social leader whose fiats none might gainsay. Indeed, from this time forward her story is that of the happy women whose deeds are unrecorded, and is only to be guessed through scanning the revelations

of her husband's journal. His health seems to have guided their movements in great measure; for they again visited Lisbon, and then came home to England, where he died, in 1768.

Lady Frankland returned to Hopkinton, and there she lived through uneventful days, with her sister and sister's children, overseeing her spacious estate, and entertaining her hosts of friends, until 1775, that fiery date of American story. A jealous patriotism was rife; and it was not unnatural that the widow of an officer of the Crown, herself a devotee of the Established Church, should become an object of local suspicion, hand in glove as she was with the British invaders of our peace. Like many another avowed royalist, she judged it best to leave her undefended estate at Hopkinton, and place herself under military protection in Boston, and there she arrived, after a short detention by some over-zealous patriot, in time to witness the battle of Bunker Hill from the windows of her house, and to receive some of the wounded

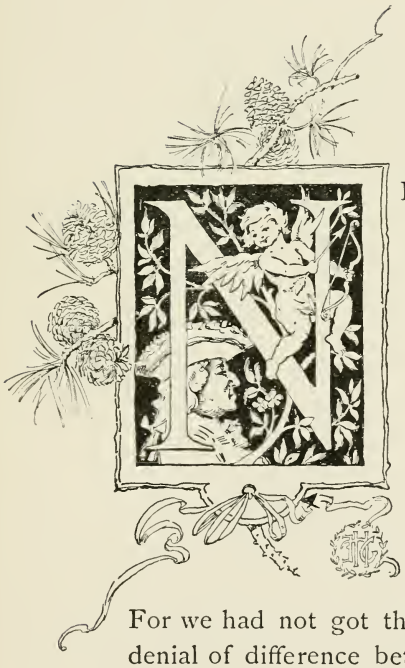
within its shelter. Thence she sailed for England, as our unpleasantness with the mother-country increased in warmth, and at this point she becomes lost to the romance-loving vision, — for, alas for those who "love a lover," and insist upon an ideal constancy! Lady Frankland was married, in the fourteenth year of her widowhood, to John Drew, a wealthy banker of Chichester, and at Chichester she died, in one year's time. But after all, on that sober second thought which is so powerful in regilding a tarnished fancy, does not her remarriage suit still better the requirements of romance? For instead of dying a staid Lady Frankland, her passions merged in the vital interests of caps and lap-dogs, she transmutes herself into another person, and

thus fades out into an unrecognized future. Since neither the name of Surriage nor Frankland is predominant in its legend, even her tomb seems lost; and the mind goes ever back in fancy to her maiden name, her maiden state, when she was the disguised and humble princess of Marblehead.

# MARTHA HILTON

The little figure with the swishing bucket.

# MARTHA HILTON



EW ENGLAND had her spurts of human nature in old times, whenever she was not taken up with the witches and the Tories, and could afford a nine-days' wonder over so simple a thing as a marriage between high and low. For we had not got then to a professional denial of difference between high and low; not as yet had the bell of Philadelphia

cracked its heart, like the philosopher Chilo, with public joy, and proclaimed the crooked ways straight, and the rough places plain. When some sweet scrub of an Agnes Surriage captured a Sir Harry, at the end of a moving third act, there was a thrill of awe and satisfaction: and forthwith the story went into our folk-lore, and very properly; since it had incidents and character. Sly damsels in Puritan caps made the most of a shifting society, full of waifs and strays from the foreign world. Royal commissioners were yet to be seen, and gold-laced Parisian barons at Newport and Norwich, and pirate Blackbeards tacking from the Shoals, and leaving sweethearts to wring ghostly hands there to this day. So that no lass had too dull an outlook upon life, nor need link herself with

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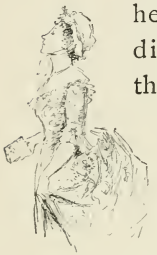
the neighboring yokel whom Providence had assigned her, while such splendid fish were in the seas. Let her but wed "above her," and she shall be a fountain-head of precedent and distinction, and the sister ideal of King Cophetua's beggar-bride.



Poor Agnes of Marblehead, as faithful as the Nut-Browne Maid herself, adorns her romantic station with living interest; but Martha Hilton, who figures in true histories and in Mr. Longfellow's pretty ballad, is a heroine of the letter, rather than of the spirit. We hear nothing of her deserts; we hear merely of her success. She became Lady Wentworth (all personable Madams were Ladies then and awhile after, even in the model republican air of Mount Vernon!) and she had been a kitchen-wench. But she was also the descendant of

the honorable founder of Dover, "a fishmonger in London," even as the great and gouty Governor, her appointed spouse, was grandson to a noblest work of God, who, in 1670, got "libertie to entertayne strangers, and sell and brew beare." In that house of beer, the hearty-timbered house planted yet by a Portsmouth inlet, with one timid bush to be seen over against the door, was Benning Wentworth born. Having subdued the alphabet, grown his last inch, looked about, married, and buried his sons and Abigail his wife, he enters upon our tale "inconsolable, to the minuet in *Ariadne*." He had played a game, too, and lost, since his weeds withered. Having proposed himself and his acres to young Mistress Pitman, he had the mortification to see her prefer one Shortridge, a mechanic. The sequel

A fishmonger in London

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shows that Benning's Excellency could rise grandly to an occasion, and also that he had an amorphous turn for the humor of things; for he had the obnoxious mechanic kidnapped and sent to sea, "for seven years long," like the child in the fairy-lay. This stroke of playfulness insured him nothing but a recoil of fate.

Events restored the lovers to each other, and he was left to console himself with his restless colony, with his snuff-boxes and his bowls. And into that lonely manor of his, malformed and delightful, sleeping over against Newcastle, meekly as befits her menial office (though it is to be suspected that she was always a minx!) enters Martha Hilton, late the horror of the landlady of the Earl of Halifax. That well-conducted Juno of Queen Street, beholding a shoeless girl fetching water from

the decent pump of Portsmouth, in a bare-shouldered estate sacred only to the indoor and adult orgies of the aristocracy, did not content herself, as the poet hath it, with

"O Martha Hilton, fie!"

Her comment had greater vivacity, and was pleasingly metrical. "You Pat, you Pat, how dare you go looking like that?" There seems to be no doubt that the pseudo-Hibernian did reply with a prophecy, and, better yet, that she made it her business to have spoken true. Seven years, according to the verses in question, did Martha serve her future lord; and it is not for this oracle, on whatever computation, to dispute with a son of Apollo. There she shed her clever childhood, and took her degree in the arts of womankind; busy with pans and clothes-lines, the sea-

Gov. Benning Wentworth

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wind always in her hair, her strategic eye upon master's deciduous charms, and perhaps, provisionally, upon master's only son, "a flower too early faded" for any mortal plucking. The latter was not fore-doomed, either, to be a stepson. He died; and in

March of 1760, one year after, a moment of historic astonishment befell the Reverend Arthur Brown, shared by the painted Strafford on the wall, when the good rector of St. John's, having dined sumptuously at Little Harbor, heard his host proclaim: —

"This is my birthday; it shall likewise be
My wedding-day, and you shall marry me!"

(Ah, no; he marrified him, did that Reverend Arthur Brown from the north of Ireland, who had so much to do, first and last, with the matrimonial oddities of the Wentworths.) And the victress, as all the world knows, was "You Pat," suddenly found standing in the fine old council-chamber, appropriately vested, and radiant with her twenty years. Abruptly were they joined, these wondrous two, and literally "across the walnuts and the wine." And now Martha had her chariot, as foretold, and her red heels, and her sweeping brocades, and a cushion towering on her powdered head, and a famous beautiful carven mantel, on which to lean her indolent elbow. By able and easy generalship is she here, with him of a race of rulers, aged sixty-five and terrible in his wrath, for her gentle orderly, her minion. The rustling of Love's wings is not audible in the Governor's corridors, perhaps would be an impertinence there, like any blow-fly's; but domestic comfort was secured upon one side, and power, swaggering power, upon the other,— a heady

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draught of it, such as might well turn a novice giddy. Tradition saith that very shortly after her elevation, Martha dropped her ring, and summoned one of her recent colleagues to rescue it from the floor. But the colleague, alas! became piteously short-sighted, and could offer no help worth having, until my lady, with great acumen, dismissed her, and picked it up.

For a full decade she rolled along, behind outriders, through the fair provincial roads, with kerchiefed children bobbing respectfully at every corner. The strange, stout, splenetic being to whom she owed her meridian glory, disgusted with events, and out of office, was gathered presently to his fathers, and left all his property in her hands. With instant despatch, the scene shifts. The Reverend Arthur Brown beholds the siren of Hilton blood again before him, with an imported Wentworth by her side: one red-coated Michael of England, who had been in the tragic smoke of Culloden. For three years now, in shady Portsmouth, he has

been striding magnificently up and down, and fiddling at Stoodley's far into the morning, for pure disinterested enthusiasm that the dancing might not flag; a live soldierly man, full of bluster and laughter, equal to many punches, and to afternoon gallops between the hills of Boston and his own fireside! The fortunate widow of one Georgian grandee became the wife of this other, his namesake; and save that Colonel Michael Wentworth was a much more suave and flexible person, besides being the "great buck" of his day, there was small divergence in him from the type of his predecessor. Men of that generation fell into a monotony: if they were rural, they were given to hunting, bousing, and swearing; the trail of Squire Western is over them all. Well did Martha, tamer of lions, know her *métier*.

Unto this twain gloriously reigning, came Washington, in 1789, rowed by white-jacketed sailors to their vine-hung, hospitable door. They were the mighty in the land; they had

"The great buck of his day."

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somehow weathered the Revolution; they were peers of—

> "The Pepperells, the Langdons, and the Lears,
> The Sparhawks, the Penhallows, and the rest,"

with their stately Devon names; and none could more fitly honor the Father of the Country. He went about the town, indeed, in a visible halo, weaving the web of peace; and his smile was called as good as sunshine, and his Sunday black velvet small-clothes elegant in the extreme. There was a younger Martha in the house, curtseying to this kind guest, who had grown up to play the spinet by the open window in lilac-time, and who, later, tautologically bestowed her hand on a Wentworth, and passed with him to France. Her father's cherry cheeks paled gradually, before he gave up his high living, and took to a bankrupt's grave, in New York, in 1795. It was feared that he checkmated too hard a fate by suicide. "I have eaten my cake," he said at the end, with a homely brevity. What was in his mind, no chronicler knoweth;

but it is not unlawful to remember that in that eaten cake Martha Hilton was a plum.

Legends such as hers have truth and rustic dignity, and they tell enough. It will not do to be too curious, to thirst for all that can be guessed or gleaned. Let Martha herself remain a myth, not to be stared at. *Il ne faut pas tout corriger.* Breathe it not to the mellower civilizations that a myth of New England can have a daughter only forty years dead! That, after all, is not the point, and is useful to recall only inasmuch as it assures sceptics that the myth was, in its unregenerate days, a fact. It rode in stage-chairs which performed once a week for thirteen-and-six; it held babes to a porphyry baptismal font stolen by heretics from Senegal; it looked upon the busy wharves now rotting along the harbor-borders; it produced love-letters on lavender-scented paper, and with an individual spelling which the brief discipline of a school for "righters, reeders, and Latiners" was not calculated to blight. Martha must have done these things!

Fiddling at Stoodley's
far into the morning

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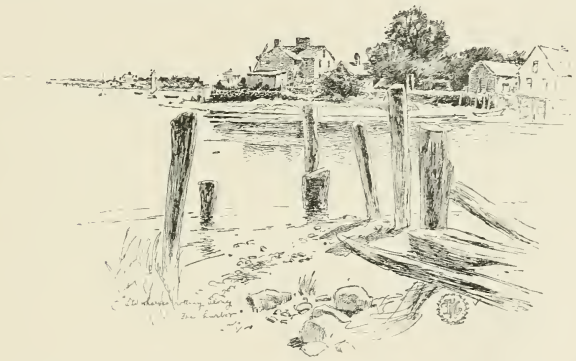
and it is no matter at all if they be suppressed. Gossip concerns itself exclusively with her first daring nuptial campaign, an event of epic significance, and in the practical manner of that immortal eighteenth century. Is it so long ago that the shouting sailors in



pigtails and petticoats lounged under the lindens, along the flagged lanes of Portsmouth, fresh from the gilded quarter-galleries and green lamps of the Spanish ships? It is not so to anybody with a Chinese love of yesterday; which is an emotion somewhat exotic, it is to be feared, on our soil. Near

to politics, if not to poetry, are the patriot pre-revolutionary mutterings of our seaboard cities, reaching the ears of the surly night-watch, before the stocks were swept away. And it was in that immediate past of effigy-burning, and tea-throwing, and social panic, that

"Mistress Stavers in her furbelows"

shook her fat finger at the little figure with the swishing bucket, not dreaming how it should blend with what we have of dearest story and song. The life back of our democracy is unsensational enough. The saucy beauty from the scullery is one of its few dabs of odd local color, and therefore to be cherished. She is part forever of the blue Piscataqua water, the wildest on the coast, and of the happy borough which shall never be again.

# NOTES

# NOTES

'T is hard, methinks, that a man cannot publish a book but he must presently give the world a reason for it, when there is not one book of twenty that will bear a reason.

Sir Roger L'Estrange.

SO I do now offer my excuses, and leave a generous public to the decision whether this book may be regarded as the one of all the twenty, or shall be counted among the unhappy nineteen. Very many there are who never hear a story but they must at once know if it be true; and if it be but partly true, they fain would know just how much is fact and how much fancy. It is to satisfy such curious folk, so far as relates to three

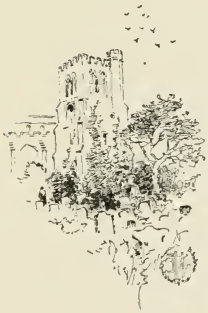
New England heroines, that these true histories have been written. The proverb runs that "Truth is stranger than fiction;" and true it is that truth is ofttimes more romantic, and does little violence, withal, to our delight in a tale.

He who reads "The Courtship of Miles Standish," and, later, learns something of the true lives of its characters, must confess to a slight shock in the discovery that the scholarly John Alden, of Longfellow's lines, was but a cooper at Southampton. Then, too, the romance that surrounds the martial Miles Standish is somewhat dulled, when one reads of his parley with the Indians and of his killing of some of them. And so, though we must confess that the tale is not wholly true, we may adopt the Italian saying, "So much the worse for truth."

Sharp eyes might see, even were it not here confessed, that Priscilla alone bears not the dignity of her full name on the half-titles of this book. Despite the eloquence of Juliet, one cannot feel the need of Mullins.

Yet, after all is said, we cannot love the poem less, but love the poet more. His genius the brighter shines, the while our curiosity is satisfied.

Curiosity is a quality denied to few, and it is pleasant to satisfy; and so three New England girls have written these three true histories, while I, the artist, have wandered here and there, with an eye to such picturesque bits as may have escaped calamity and progress. This the excuse for the book, and now the story of the artist's quest.



First to Hopkinton, from Winchester, by bicycle, — a way which lay by the "Wayside Inn." Nothing is more disappointing than such a search for oldtime scenes, but yet it is a joy, for one sees so much that is delightful, if not closely related to the object of the quest. The road wound always to new beauties. The way led by old houses and picturesque barns, shaded by lofty trees, past fertile farms and modern dwellings, bristling with gables and rising

among green, smooth-shaven lawns. A season earlier I had spent in England; and when Weston was reached, with its quaint stone church, the thought arose of those village churches of Old

England with their ivy-covered towers, and, all about, God's acre.

But here no manor-house rose proudly above the trees, no coat-of-arms was sculptured over the cottage doors. Indeed, the picturesque cottages

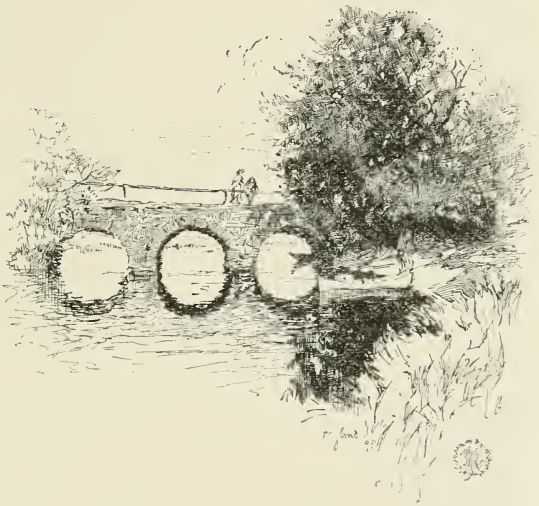
themselves were missed, and in their stead were the plainest of dwellings; but upon the green rose something far prouder than a coat of arms, the

flag-staff, and, at its head, the flag streaming in the breeze.

This is the one distinctive feature of the typical New England village. Always upon the village green is seen the flag-staff, although the town-pump may have long ago gone, and the band-stand not yet come.

The ride continued, and still I found comparisons between Old and New England, but not to the discredit of either. Now are more old houses sheltered by great elms; stone walls, green fringed; merry children coming from school; pastures, with grazing cattle; and so lies the way through Wayland, by the fields and rivers, over picturesque stone bridges, up hill and down, until we come to Sudbury.

Sudbury is connected with our Martha Hilton, for her story makes one of the "Tales of the Wayside Inn." The old hostelry does not look



particularly antique now. It reminds me of what a friend of mine once said, "'T is wonderful what one can do with a little putty and paint." There are some who would, doubtless, prefer to see the old inn without that fresh coat of yellow; and yet all will commend that generous public

spirit which is preserving for us this shrine of the muse. And it may be that it will longer resist the attacks of time, protected by its jacket of yellow, than it would be able to, did it wear Nature's soft mantle of gray. But yet the place is one of interest, and all about is beautiful. The inn has, at least, one merit, inasmuch as it leaves much to be imagined, and it is well worthy of a visit.

From thence to Hopkinton is a matter of a dozen miles, the last four of which are exceedingly rough and hilly. At Ashland, it is said that it is four miles to Hopkinton, and three miles back. From this it may be inferred that the village is one of those which, "set on a hill, cannot be hid." Little of bygone days is left for the sight of the pilgrim to this village. Here is a noble elm, said to measure twenty-five feet in circumference. It

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is said to have been brought from England, and set out by the fair hands of Madam Elizabeth Price, whose husband, then rector of King's Chapel, was a close friend of Frankland. It was in their house that Agnes Surriage found shelter while she and Frankland were building their home.

The Frankland mansion stood upon the old highway, now a country road, pleasant and shady, midway between Hopkinton and Ashland. The old mansion was destroyed by fire in 1858, and in its place now stands a modern structure, said, though questionably, to bear a resemblance to the original building. A bit of the ancient woodwork is seen in a shed, at the rear; and at the side is a beautiful and gigantic flower vase, made from the upturned stump of one of Frankland's great trees. This is the tree to which Dr. Holmes refers in his poem, "Agnes," where he says, —

> "Three elms, high arching, still are seen,
> And one lies stretched below."

This elm, too, is said to have had a girth of twenty-five feet. Indeed, this is the legend which attaches to all of the ancient trees hereabout, so

that I concluded that it was a figure of speech equivalent to the forty-eleven of my boyhood and the *trente-six* of the French. The fine, noble elms at the west of the lawn, said by Dr. Chadwick to have been planted by the lovers, cast a broad curtain of shade over the drive and lawn. Dr. Nason,[1] writing in 1865, records the circumference of the largest two of these as twelve feet each, but doubtless by this time they have reached the conventional girth of twenty-five.

Since Dr. Nason's time the old box of Sir Harry's borders, described as having a height of ten or twelve feet, has nearly disappeared except a few plants remaining before the house, and on the terraces built by Sir Harry's slaves. One who knew some of the descendants of Agnes and Frankland well says that, in her youthful days, the young girls were wont to gather this box, for Christmas greens, with which to deck the old church. A bright, sunny day will serve to dispel the terrible ghost of Dr. Nason's early days, and the bewitched pump no longer displays its weird way-

[1] "Sir Charles Henry Frankland, or Boston in the Colonial Times." Elias Nason, M. A. Albany, N. Y.: J. Munsell.

Great Elms.
Hopkinton.

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wardness, but yields, instead, a cool, refreshing draught.

The pilgrim to the places that knew Agnes would naturally first visit Marblehead, her birthplace; yet, on my quest, I reached it last. Others, in a similar pilgrimage, would go first where fancy or opportunity leads; and this is the true spirit of roaming. So next to Roxbury, to visit Shirley Place. The reader remembers how delightfully Mr. Bynner introduced Mrs. Shirley into his romance, and will recall his story of Agnes's ride there, in the collector's coach. In my boyhood days in Roxbury, the old mansion was called the Eustis House, and it stood in a great field given over to goats and burdocks. There are those living who remember it when Madam Eustis still lived there. This grand dame wore a majestic turban; and the tradition still lingers of madam's pet toad, on gala days decked with a blue ribbon. Now the old house is sadly dilapidated. It is

shorn of its piazzas, the sign "To Let" hangs often in the windows, and the cupola is adorned with well-filled clothes-lines. Partitions have cut the house into tenements. One runs right through the hall, but the grand old staircase and the smaller one are still there, and the marble floor, too, in the back hall. A few of the carved balusters are missing, carried away by relic-hunters.

"'T is a great city," said Goody Surriage, as she peered at Colonial Boston, over the shoulders of Agnes and Mrs. Shirley. Now, it is truly a great city, wreathed in smoke and steam; and all about are churches, school-houses, and factories, while the "broomstick train" of Dr. Holmes' fancy whirls along, close by the ancient mansion. The engraving is from a sketch made many years ago. Since then the old house has been entirely surrounded by modern dwelling-houses. The pilgrim who searches for it will leave the Mt. Pleasant electric car at Shirley Street.

In Medford is a house often visited by Sir Harry and Agnes, known as the Royall House. This house, also, to-day shelters more than a single tenant. Here is a little drawing of this home of hospitality, which was forsaken so hastily by its

The Royall House
Medford

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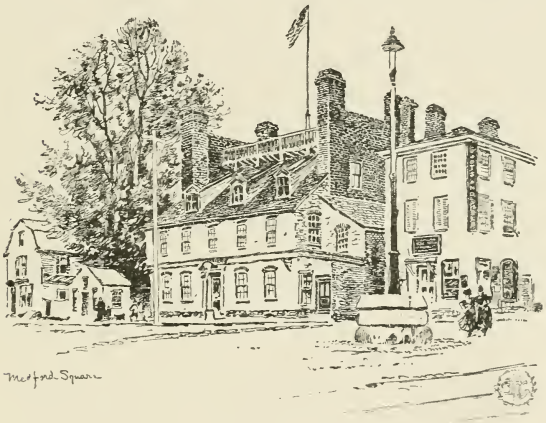
fleeing owner, the Colonel, alarmed by the too near crack of the guns at Lexington. "A Tory against his will; it was the frailty of his blood, more than the fault of his judgment." The electric cars from Boston to Medford pass the door of




the old mansion, as it stands near the corner of Royall Street. Medford has a picturesque town square; and it is only a pleasant walk to the Craddock House, built in 1632, now converted into a museum, and thus, after many vicissitudes, rescued from the usual fate of ancient landmarks.

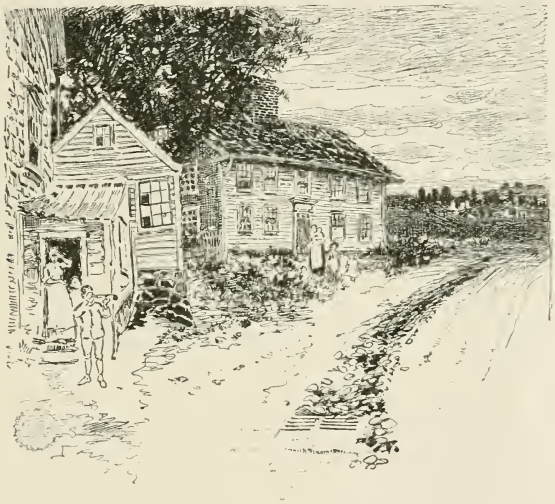
And now to Marblehead, by road or by rail as

one chooses. Perhaps the pleasantest route is from Lynn or Salem by electric car. By either route, the ride is a pleasure, and although little remains to tell of Agnes in her girlhood, there is much that is quaint and picturesque; and to visit

the old town is well worth one's time. Arrived at Marblehead, the visitor walking down the main road to Orne Street, and ascending the hill to the old burying-ground, will see by the wayside the old houses, "set catty-cornered," as the quaint old saying is, and the bright gardens. Now upstairs and now down run the streets, and likely enough

the visitor will meet "many an old Marbleheader," pictures in themselves.

Just where the road turns to skirt the burying-ground at the left, is Moll Pitcher's house. Whit-



tier draws the portrait of our New England witch in one of his poems, handling her no more gently than he does her fellow-townsman, old Floyd Ireson. This house is the home of her youth; as a

witch, she flourished in Lynn. I have often heard stories of her predictions, and one of my cherished possessions is a small square of yellow quilted silk, which once formed a part of Moll's brave array.

Across the way stood the Fountain Inn. Here, upon its site, and overlooking the harbor, are two cottages, in front of which is the well of the old hostelry, from whence Agnes drew the draught of water which she offered to Sir Harry. This fountain has been recently brought to light, and still refreshes the traveller as of yore. Beneath the apple-trees which shade it is found a restful seat, from which one may look out over a scene of singular beauty. As often as one looks upon this scene, it meets the eye with an added charm.

We little realize the beauty of our sea. In summer time it is ofttimes as blue as the waters of the Mediterranean, a dark, intense blue, broken by purple patches, by beautiful streaks of emerald, dotted with warm, glowing rocks, and accentuated by snowy, foaming breakers. Below the hill, to the left, are some fishermen's huts, surrounded by nets, drying in the sunshine, boats ashore, old lobster-pots, and anchors, all in picturesque confusion, ready to be sketched and painted.

Away up above the well and the cottages, is the old burying-ground, with restful benches here as well. Here, one can look across the little harbor to old Fort Sewall, and here, just at the base of the fort, so says Mr. Bynner, is the probable site of the home of Agnes Surriage.

A walk to the old fort is full of interest. Many shady spots are there, in which to rest, and watch the waves breaking on the rocks below. From this point it is but a step to the terminus of the electric cars, at the foot of Circle Street. In this street, upon the right, is old Floyd Ireson's house, dark and weather-beaten. But the tourist is advised not to ask too many questions concerning

him, of the old Marbleheaders; for it is a tender point with them, and it is whispered that Mr. Whittier's ballad is more fraught with fancy than with fact.

From this point, it is interesting to walk up the hill, following the windings and turnings of the street. Let the traveller not fail to look into the queer old back-yards, and at the gardens, filled with old-fashioned flowers, gorgeous in their splendor, nor to turn and view the prospect toward the town. The quaint streets here are filled with old and picturesque houses. Some are fine examples of colonial architecture, and some are interesting as the birthplaces of eminent men. These places should be preserved and marked with appropriate tablets.

Now cross over to the hill on which sits the Abbott memorial. Here are many stately old houses, well worth the attention of the sight-seer. The electric cars or the steam railway are near at hand, on the other side of the hill, and to return to Boston by way of Salem is a pretty ride.

So much for Agnes and Marblehead. Her stately house at the North End in Boston, from the windows of which she watched the battle of

Circle Street and
"Old Fred Ourson's"
House

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Bunker Hill, has long since gone; but Copp's Hill burying-ground, the Old North Church, Paul Revere's house, and many other old houses are still there.

And now, of Martha Hilton. Portsmouth was her home and the scene of her brilliant matrimonial campaign. This is one of the most picturesque of our New England towns. Aldrich's "An Old Town by the Sea" should be read by the pilgrim on his way. No one loves the old town more, or knows it better than he. Much remains, here, to tell of Martha Hilton, but a day well suffices to see it all. A short walk from the railway-station is a pleasant, old-fashioned market square. At times it is filled with wagons of hay and loads of wood, while, all about, is a subdued bustle. From this square leads Pleasant Street, well named, and, only a few steps away, it is crossed by State Street, once Queen Street, at the foot of which once stood Stavers' Inn, the "Earl of Halifax." It was in the doorway of this inn that Mistress Stavers "fied" Martha Hilton *circa anno Domini* 1754. No print or picture of this old inn is known to exist. Beyond State Street is Court Street, with interesting old houses, and some of the ancient

flagging here and there. On the cross streets is more of this, with sometimes a gutter in the middle of the street. All of this portion of the town is interesting, dirty, primitive, and full of memories. Parallel with Pleasant Street are Washington and Water streets, from which, at right angles, run a dozen lanes, not a whit altered since Martha's time. Here is where the sailors in pig-tails and petticoats used to gather. At the corner of Water and Gardiner streets, let the visitor notice the great golden linden, overshadowing a house as old and as lovely as the tree itself.

The neighborhood is full of old houses, with hip roofs and gables. The Point of Graves, a stone's throw away, is sadly neglected. Children sometimes play on a large, flat tombstone, and curiosity-seekers skip from one headstone to another, in search of the oldest date. The old stones are sculptured with grim skulls and cross-bones, or with humorous cherubs. One thinks of the days Tom Bailey spent here, when he was a blighted being. Let us hope that it was a more secluded spot then than now.

Close by is Manning Place, very short, and at the corner is the square, strong house, built prior

"This is where the sailors in pigtails and petticoats used to be."

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to 1670, where Benny Wentworth and his sires were born. A grand place this once was, with its lawn extending to Puddle Dock. Once this was a fair inlet, but now no one will dispute the rightfulness of its name.

From this point it is a pleasant walk to the old Wentworth mansion, where Martha came, slaved and conquered, even receiving as her guest the Father of his country. Skirt around the Point of Graves, and follow along the water side, by the Gardiner House and its big linden, over the bridge, and past the Proprietors' burying-ground; everywhere it is picturesque. From thence let the traveller follow the left fork of the road in full view of the river for a portion of the way, and thence pass through pine groves and between great bowlders, until, with a sudden descent, a fair prospect seaward bursts upon the vision. At one's feet, toward the left, is the old house, "malformed and delightful." I well remember when it was venerable in appearance and in its rooms were to be seen the old spinet, the Strafford portrait, and many other things so delightful to the antiquary. But, alas! it now is "spick-span" in yellow and white paint, and set back in a well-groomed lawn.

The visitor will, of course, wish to see St. John's. It has an interesting interior. Here is the old

plate, the "Vinegar" Bible, and other quaint and curious things. The steeple is modern. All about are fine old houses and great spreading trees.

the Gardiner House
and the Linden

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Stoodley's, too, one will wish to see, where the gallant captain "fiddled far into the morning." It is the brick building, marked "Custom House," and it stands at the corner of Daniel and Penhallow streets.

These are the principal points of interest connected with the life of Martha Hilton, but Portsmouth old and quaint affords much more to which the eye of the lover of the antique will surely turn.

Every one visits Plymouth, the home of Priscilla. There is little need to dwell upon this place here. A Plymouth pilgrimage, if by sea, is easy and pleasant. Of guide-books there is no lack, and all that remains of the Puritan maiden's time is read-

ily found. Even Plymouth Rock is carefully enclosed; and rightly, too, else it would long since have been carried away in fragments. On the hill is the old burying-ground, from which fine views may be had of the old town and of the harbor where the "Mayflower" lay at anchor, the sweeping coast here low in sandy dunes, now high in

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bolder bluffs. The electric car is here also, which takes one the length of the town and far beyond, passing the Memorial Hall, where are so many relics of old colony days. Plymouth, indeed, is easily to be seen. It is the Mecca, to-day, of many pilgrims. What has been done for Plymouth, I have tried to do for the other old towns into whose histories are woven the lives of our heroines. Many of these old houses will soon have passed away. Many have disappeared within a few years past. Let us hope, however, that the little now left to us will long remain, and especially may we hope will be preserved all that serves to remind us of these Three Heroines of New England Romance.

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